

Filed for intro on 06/27/2000

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 884

By Kisber

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend John Ferguson on his
meritorious service to Tennessee as
Commissioner of Finance and Administration.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pay tribute to those exemplary professionals and remarkable public servants who have contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of this state during their meritorious careers in state government; and

WHEREAS, no public servant could be more deserving of this special recognition than John Ferguson, Commissioner of Finance and Administration; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of Mississippi State University, Commissioner Ferguson began his distinguished career as a marketing representative with IBM Corporation and, in 1971, he co-founded Econocom, a computer sales and leasing firm located in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, in 1981, John served with alacrity as president of Jobs for Tennessee Graduates, a youth development training program sponsored by the State of Tennessee and the City of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, he founded the Equity Investment Corporation in Memphis in 1982, and adroitly served as the company's Chief Executive Officer; in 1990, Commissioner Ferguson

became the Chairman and CEO of Community Bancshares, Inc., the parent corporation of the Community Bank of Germantown; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Ferguson joined Governor Sundquist's administration in January 1996, when he was selected to lead the commission responsible for ensuring the state's compliance with the federal court order relative to Arlington Developmental Center; and

WHEREAS, as a member of the Commission on Compliance, John Ferguson distinguished himself as a strong advocate for mentally retarded citizens; he immersed himself in the details of the service and support aspects of appropriate care of Tennessee's mentally retarded population, and insisted on high medical standards and accountability by the state; and

WHEREAS, the very epitome of the concerned and competent public servant, John Ferguson has also contributed his innumerable talents as a member of the State Board of Education and the Governor's Commission on Practical Government; and

WHEREAS, as Tennessee's chief corporate officer, Commissioner Ferguson has directed the preparation and implementation of the state's \$16.6 billion budget; and

WHEREAS, his dedication and commitment to serving Tennesseans, and his proficiency and professionalism have directly resulted in the Department's receipt of numerous awards for excellence in budget preparation, financial reporting, financial management and information systems management; and

WHEREAS, under his astute leadership at the helm of the Department of Finance and Administration, Tennessee has maintained its enviable position as one of the most fiscally responsible states in the country, due in large part to Commissioner Ferguson's adherence to the sagacious philosophy of "doing the right things at the right size"; and

WHEREAS, he has distinguished himself as a tireless public servant, working long hours when necessary to accomplish the goals of the Department; and

WHEREAS, highly respected by many people in state government, John Ferguson is also known to his staff as a generous man and an advocate for the continued development of

the Nashville economy, as illustrated by his eagerness to leave \$30 tips on \$40 restaurant tabs at local eateries; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Ferguson has popularized the English translation of *Non posses fabricari talia, etsi temptarisses*, when referring to matters of the state; and

WHEREAS, John Ferguson can best be described as knowledgeable, fair, and compassionate; he has readily assisted the members of the General Assembly during protracted budget negotiations, not only during session, but also throughout the year, in resolving important issues that will affect Tennesseans for years to come; and

WHEREAS, John has always been straightforward and truthful with legislators, as evidenced by his moniker, "Honest John" that is used by many on Capitol Hill. Even though he may not have always been in a position to provide the answer everyone wanted, he carefully explained the situation at hand and earned the respect of everyone involved in the process; and

WHEREAS, John's distinctive progress up and down the halls of the Legislative Plaza, commonly referred to as a "strut," will be greatly missed, as will his Formal Friday code of dress, which was instituted much to the dismay of his staff; and

WHEREAS, when he testified before a committee of the General Assembly, he could always be depended upon to provide full and accurate information, and he has been rivaled only by his friend, Comptroller John Morgan, in time spent at the podium; and

WHEREAS, John is especially grateful for the love and support of his lovely wife, Carole; their three daughters, Amy Pipes, wife of Wesley Pipes, Julie Ferguson, and Ashley Waltemath, wife of Ward Waltemath; and three grandchildren, Sam, Larkin and Mattie, who affectionately refer to him as "Grandfather"; and

WHEREAS, John Ferguson's departure is a loss to state government, the public as a whole and to this General Assembly; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE

CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and commend Commission John Ferguson for his meritorious service to the Department of Finance and Administration and the people of Tennessee. His departure will create a void that will not be easily filled, and his consummate professionalism and incomparable work ethic will be sorely missed in state government and beyond.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we wish for Mr. Ferguson all the best in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation to John Ferguson with this final clause omitted from such copy.